



DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME

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December 9, 2005

Second Dungeness Crab Season Delay Notification

Fish and Game Code (FGC) Section 8276.2 (c) provides the Director with the authority to delay the December 1 season opening, due to soft-shell or poor quality crab conditions, in Fish and Game Districts 6, 7, 8 & 9 (Mendocino, Humboldt, and Del Norte counties) for a minimum of 15 days. In a notice dated November 22, 2005, the crab season was delayed for 15 days and indicated the Department would determine whether an additional 15 day delay was necessary.

Crab quality tests conducted on December 7, 2005, indicate the crabs will not be ready for harvest on December 16, 2005. Based on these data and the interest in cooperatively managing the interstate Dungeness crab fishery, I am delaying the opening of Dungeness crab season in northern California (Districts 6, 7, 8 & 9) until 12:01 am December 31, 2005. There will be no additional crab testing and no further delays beyond December 31st.

Pursuant to FGC Section 8276.3 (b), the opening date in Districts 6, 7, 8 and 9 shall be preceded by a 36-hour gear setting period. Therefore, crab gear may be set beginning no earlier than 12:01 pm on December 29, 2005.

The states of Oregon and Washington have also delayed their season openings so the entire west coast, north of Point Arena, will open at the same time. As provided in FGC Section 8276.3 no vessel may take or land crab within Districts 6, 7, 8 & 9 during the closure period. **In addition, FGC Section 8279.1 prohibits anyone who landed crab from ocean waters outside of Districts 6, 7, 8 & 9 from participating in the crab fishery in Districts 6, 7, 8 & 9, or any other delayed opening area, until 12:01 am January 30, 2006.**

L. Ryan Broddrick
Director